



▼ Gay Pride Month ▼



Andy Warhol

The American artist and filmmaker Andy Warhol was born Andrew Warhola in 1928. He is considered a founder and major figure of the POP ART movement. A graduate of the Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1949, he moved to New York City and gained success as a commercial artist. He got his first break in August 1949, when Glamour Magazine wanted him to illustrate a feature entitled "Success is a Job in New Your." But by accident the credit read "Drawings by Andy Warhol" and that's how Andy dropped the "a" in his last name. He continued doing ads and illustrations and by 1955, he was the most successful and imitated commercial artist in New York. In 1960 he produced the first of his paintings depicting enlarged comic strip images - initially for use in a window display. Warhol pioneered the development of the process whereby an enlarged photographic image is transferred to a silk screen that is then placed on a canvas and inked from the back. It was this technique that enabled him to produce the series of mass-media images - repetitive, yet with slight variations - that he began in 1962. These, incorporating such items as Campell's Soup cans, dollar bills, Coca-Cola bottles, and the faces of celebrities, can be taken as comments on the banality, harshness, and ambiguity of American culture.

Later in the 1960s, Warhol made a series of experimental films dealing with such ideas as time, boredom, and repetition; they include Sleep (1963), Empire (1964), and The Chelsea Girls (1966). In 1965 he started working with a rockband called The Velvet Underground.

On June 3rd, 1968, Valerie Solanis, a rejected superstar, came into The Factory and shot Andy three times in the chest. He was rushed to hospital where he was pronounced dead, but after having his chest cut up and been given heart massage, he survived. After recovering Andy Warhol continued to work. He founded inter/VIEW magazine in 1969 (they changed the name to Interview in 1971), published The Philosophy of Andy Warhol: From A to B and Back Again in 1975 and continued to paint portraits until his death in 1987.